

## **2011 EmPOWER Clean Energy Communities Grant Program Conference Call Q&A**

**Q: Can we use audit recommendations from last fiscal year (FY10) that we were unable to fund as projects for this fiscal year (FY11)?**

A: Yes but you need to mention what you spent last year's grant funds on and how you prioritized last year's work over the work you have identified for this year. Clearly state the energy savings associated with each of the proposed projects.

**Q: Will there be a Round 2 this year?**

A: Last year some counties did not submit any applicants apply for a Grant during the initial grant solicitation. Because of this situation, MEA opened up a second round in counties where funding was remaining after the initial round in order to allocate all of the 2010 EmPOWER Clean Energy Communities Grant Program funds.

**Q: Does the Grant review team place a higher emphasis a larger amount of household being served for fewer energy efficiency measures over a lower number of households served with a deeper level of energy efficiency measures?**

A: The primary evaluation criteria of the grant are annual energy savings, the impact on Maryland's low-to-moderate income residents, and ability of project to be completed during the project period. All of these factors are considered when evaluating grant applications.

**Q: Is it acceptable to use a new innovation for home energy management?**

A: It is acceptable. However, as with any proposed project for the Grant, the energy saving need to be quantified. This could be a challenge with a new and unproved technology.

**Q: Does every property where work will be performed need to submit a project review form with the Maryland Historic Trust?**

A: Yes, all EmPOWER Clean Energy Community grant program projects must comply with historical preservation requirements. This review will ensure that no projects funded under this program will have an "adverse effect" on any historic properties. The project review form can be found on our website: <http://www.energy.maryland.gov/incentives/state-local/empowercleanenergycommunities.asp>

The form will only need to be completed for projects that receive an award - you do not have to have the form completed to apply for a grant.

**Q: Are window replacements acceptable as a proposed project?**

A: Yes. However, window replacements tend to have a high cost relative to the amount of associated energy savings. Window replacement projects can also have problems meeting historic preservation requirements if they are on a historic building or in a historic area. As with

any other proposed project, window replacements will need to meet the primary evaluation criteria of the grant: annual energy savings, relative impact on Maryland's low-to-moderate income residents, and ability of project to be completed during the project period.

**Q: How were the County allocations for the grant determined?**

A: In order to ensure an equitable distribution of grant funds, each Maryland county (or county equivalent) was appropriated an allocation of EmPOWER Clean Energy Communities grant funds based on the number of low-to-moderate income households residing in the respective county (or county equivalent) relative to the number of low-to-moderate income households statewide, based on census data.

**Q: Are people who do work, like students, part of the administrative costs?**

A: Workers installing energy measures are not part of the administrative costs; they would be considered labor costs necessary to install the project. Workers writing grant reports or serving in other administrative capacities would need to be included as part of the administrative costs.

**Q: What kind of documentation is required to estimate costs associated with the stipend of match of an intern?**

A: If you plan on requesting administrative costs, a breakdown of the administrative costs must be included with the project proposal. An estimate of the expected hours of work and the wage that will be paid to the intern(s) would be a part of your project proposal.

**Q: Can home energy retrofit projects be submitted that use a contractor other than the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program?**

A: The MEA encourages the use of the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program for home retrofits because the certification requires a certain level of training in energy efficiency retrofits and building science. If you propose an energy efficiency retrofit project using a contractor with different energy credentials, you will need to explain their qualifications and credentials with your proposed project and grant application.

**Q: Is an incorporated non-profit (C) (6) an eligible applicant?**

A: Eligible applicants are:

- Local governments
- Incorporated non-profit organizations
- Homeowners Associations
  - Homeowners Associations as defined by Title 11B of the Real Property Article, Code of Maryland
- Condominium Associations

- Condominium Associations as defined by Title 11 of the Real Property Article, Code of Maryland

**Q: Should the headquarters address be where our mail is sent?**

A: Your address should always include a physical street address as well as the address for mail correspondence if mail is sent to a PO Box, Parcel Plus, or other place.

**Q: Can we pay for energy audits as part of the grant?**

A: Yes, energy audits can be funded provided that the project will focus on the audit recommendations. However, please remember that there are no energy savings associated with the audit itself, it is the work done after the audit (increase insulation, lighting upgrades, etc...) that save energy.